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RESPONSE TO THE JEFFERSON REPORT  
BY THE JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMISSION OF SAN FRANCISCO

Prepared in Conjunction with Howard Schechter, Ph.D.  
December, 1987

This report by the Juvenile Justice Commission contains our analysis of the report of Jefferson Associates titled "Creating a New Agenda for the Care and Treatment of San Francisco's Juvenile Offenders" and our recommendations. Our efforts were in response to the assignment by the Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court.

Before the members of the Commission met to discuss the findings and the recommendations of the Jefferson Report, we met with staff and representatives of agencies working with the Juvenile Court and we attended six neighborhood public meetings<sup>1</sup> that we co-sponsored with the Citizens Advisory Committee which Jefferson Associates had created. We would like to thank the many persons and community groups who contributed many hours in making the arrangements for and publicizing each of the meetings. Among them are the Black Child and Family Network, the San Francisco Religious Council, the Mission Forum, the Round Table Coalition, Chinese for Affirmative Action, the Korean Community Service Center, the Coastline Community Advisory Board, Merrill Lynch Realty Co., Youth Advocates, Mission YMCA, Asian-American Youth Services Coalition, Center for

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The six meetings were held at the following locations:

- 1) Ella Hill Hutch Community Center  
July 1, 1987
- 2) Horace Mann Junior High School  
July 9, 1987
- 3) St. Paul of the Shipwreck Church  
July 16, 1987
- 4) Hall of Flowers, Golden Gate Park  
July 22, 1987
- 5) Balboa High School, Little Theatre  
July 29, 1987
- 6) St. Mary's Cathedral  
August 5, 1987



Southeast Asian Refugee Resettlement, Vietnamese Youth Development Center, Larkin Street Youth Center and Hospitality House. The Commission members listened carefully to the comments of neighborhood residents, many of whom spoke of the need to increase and to improve services for children and youth who become involved in the juvenile justice system. Many spoke of existing community services for youth which they feel are under-utilized or overlooked. It was the Commission's observation that attendance at community meetings did not reflect a sufficiently broad representation of the communities. We found an over-representation of service providers among the participants, but their comments were extremely enlightening. A common theme expressed in the hearings was the sense of estrangement that exists between many segments of the community and the juvenile justice system. It was the serious intention of the Commission members to consider the statements of neighborhood speakers and to integrate them into our findings, comments, and recommendations. We learned as we listened and the Commission is appreciative of the attendance at the meetings and of the communities' input.

This report of the Juvenile Justice Commission is the product of many hours of serious deliberations by its members. We have not always agreed unanimously on all of our findings and recommendations, but we have worked out our differences in order that our report can be a clear and positive set of guidelines to the Judges of the Superior Court, the Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court, and the Chief Juvenile Probation Officer.

The Commission would like to make clear and definite our unanimous belief that there must and should be enhanced and mutually satisfying cooperation and coordination of efforts among the three units responsible for the care and welfare of children and youth: the counseling and probation staff, the public health staff, and the school department staff.

Changes in the ways we make decisions and in the ways we work daily with troubled children and youth do not come easily. Members of the Juvenile Justice Commission pledge ourselves to work diligently and cooperatively with others to plan and to implement more effective and more sensitive services to children and youth who need the assistance of public departments and community-based agencies.

We must remember that "The art of progress is to preserve order amid change and to preserve change amid order."



## VALUES, MISSION, POLICY AND PROCEDURE

The Commission agrees with the overall intention of the recommendations in this section. "There is a need to develop, in a participatory manner, Departmental statements of values, mission, policies and procedures." (p. 146)

Recommendation 1: A Departmental committee should be established to undertake a long-term effort to develop a Departmental mission statement to explore and develop Departmental values which underlie the provision of services and to establish a comprehensive set of operational policies and procedures. (p. 147)

The Commission feels everyone, the Court, the Probation Department, Health Services, Education and youth have much to gain and should be involved in the process of implementation of this recommendation as soon as possible. We recognize this is a major task which will take substantial time and resources. We have learned that a grant has already been obtained from the San Francisco Foundation which enabled the Chief Probation Officer to employ an external consultant to work with the administration, staff and detainees to develop a mission statement, policies and procedures and to write a manual which reflects departmental values. We commend the Chief Probation Officer's prompt attention to this need and look forward to the production of the manual this spring. We encourage the continued working together of all levels of staff and administration, health and education professionals, with input from youth, to keep the goals and objectives responsive to changing circumstances.

Recommendation 2: The currently vacant Assistant Chief Probation Officer position should be reclassified as exempt and filled immediately with the specific intent that a primary responsibility of this position would be the development of Departmental values, mission, policies and procedures. (p. 149)

The Commission believes it is important that a new Assistant Chief be hired immediately. We feel that reclassifying the position as exempt is appropriate. The Chief Probation Officer needs at least this level of executive authority and latitude in matters of personnel to accomplish his task of improving the juvenile justice system.

It is not advisable to limit the Assistant's job description to the mission development project. That is best determined by the Chief Probation Officer. It is



possible that the process of developing values and mission is best accomplished through the facilitation of an outside consultant qualified in both juvenile justice matters and management development. [See Recommendation 1]

We believe that the Chief Probation Officer should be intimately involved in the values and mission development process. It is appropriate for the chief executive of an organization to work closely in the development of such "big picture" issues as this. Further, the present Chief Probation Officer is very skilled in this type of work and his close involvement would greatly facilitate the process.

Recommendation 3: The development of values, mission, policies and procedures should be designated as the top Departmental priority and the process should begin immediately upon recruitment of the assistant Chief Probation Officer. All administrative, line and contracted staff should be required to participate in this effort through the committee and subcommittee structure and/or on a time-limited task basis. (p. 149)

We fully agree that the development of values and mission are a top Department priority. We strongly support the involvement of all individuals willing to participate into the development of values, mission, policies and procedures. [See Recommendation 1]


Recommendation 4: Funds should be set aside by the Department to undertake the accreditation process and acquire the periodic services of appropriate consultants to assist as needed. (p. 149)

Accreditation is an important goal and a useful process. It serves as motivation to improve the system and an ongoing check on quality. However, given the enormous financial demands on the juvenile justice system and the limited resources available we do not believe that anything beyond a modest appropriation of funds for the accreditation process is appropriate at this time.

The Department should work cumulatively towards accreditation as a goal. It should do so in a manner that does not involve an expensive undertaking.

Recommendation 5: A new position of Quality Control Manager should be established within the Department to assist the Assistant Chief Probation Officer in the development process and to assume responsibility for implementation, monitoring and auditing, periodic updating and staff training as the operational policies and procedures are put in place. (p. 149)





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The Commission agrees that it is important for the Probation Department to have a Quality Control component. One way to institute that is to hire a Quality Control Manager, as the report recommends. Another is to execute the function through a departmental committee system.

Doing quality control through a system that involves a wide range of staff would have the distinct advantage of bringing the people who deliver services into the process of insuring that the services are of good quality. This approach is becoming increasingly popular and effective in the private sector.

If the Department elects to perform this function through a Quality Control Manager, we believe that the position should have exempt status. This would allow the Chief Probation Officer to better build an executive team to assist him in facilitating the important changes that are now taking place in the San Francisco juvenile justice system.

Recommendation 6: The current system of formal communication should be strengthened throughout the Department. Staff meetings should be reviewed and strengthened. (p. 150)

Recommendation 7: The Chief Probation Officer should formally invite constructive criticism and critiques from staff on issues related to Departmental operations. Ad hoc committees should be established to consider and make recommendations on ideas referred. (p. 150)

Recommendation 8: A Department newsletter should be developed. (p. 151)

The Commission agrees that improving communication within the Probation Department and its allied departments, health services and the school is a high priority and will be very helpful in improving the overall functioning of the Department.

We see all three of the above recommendations as focused approaches to improving communication, staff morale, and the quality of services to youth. These and other methods which will improve the horizontal and vertical communication in the Department should be instituted as soon as possible.

Due to the size of the Department, its complex functions, and its history of interdepartmental conflict, it may be appropriate to designate a staff position, perhaps



"Training Officer", whose function it is to facilitate communication. Whatever strategy is taken to improve communication, we believe the effort should be closely monitored to allow continuing readjustment to ensure success.

## PERSONNEL AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The Commission agrees with the general intent of upgrading personnel practices within the Probation Department. However, it must be pointed out that personnel practices are in large part controlled by Civil Service procedures and the Department's autonomy in this area is limited. It is suggested that the Chief Probation Officer, the Judges of the Juvenile Court and the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court meet to devise a plan to improve personnel practices, including the most effective ways to implement the recommendations presented in this section.

The Commission agrees with the need for:

- Enhanced basic and in-service training;
- Reduction in the use of temporary personnel;
- Racial and ethnic balance in staff reflecting the youth population under supervision and detention;
- Consultation with staff before changes which effect them;
- Upgrading standards for work performance and providing regular feedback on performance.

It also agrees with the need for:

- Tightening hiring practices so that more capable personnel are recruited;
- Emphasizing ability in upgrading and promotions.

Recommendation 1: A Probation Department Committee to develop a comprehensive training plan for the Department should be established. (p. 152)

Establishing a multi-departmental committee, including Health Services and Education to work with the Training Officer to develop a comprehensive training plan is an excellent recommendation. Further, the Commission agrees with the policies and training areas enumerated in the recommendation. We believe every effort should be made to implement this recommendation immediately.



Recommendation 2: All new detention counselors should receive the required hours of training before assuming full responsibilities at the Youth Guidance Center. (p. 153)

Recommendation 3: The adequacy and deployment of clerical support staff and the level of office automation should be reviewed and upgraded by the Department. (p. 154)

The Commission fully supports these recommendations.

The Commission supports Recommendation 4: that the proportion of temporary employees be reduced and that a target of no more than twenty percent of the regular work force be set for temporary staff. (p. 154)

The Commission supports this recommendation and believes it should be instituted immediately. We suggest that tests be given regularly to ensure that there is always a list in effect for the Counselor and Probation Officer series.

Recommendation 5: The job performance standards established by the state-sponsored Standards and Training in Corrections should be adopted by the Probation Department. (p. 154)

The Commission supports the establishment of job performance standards. We commend the Probation Department for its initiative in establishing a job performance standards committee to achieve this end.

Recommendation 6: Accelerating the establishing of staffing patterns that better reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of the youth community. (p. 155) The Commission strongly supports this goal. We recognize the many problems inherent in achieving this goal, including the changing racial and ethnic population in the City as well as restrictions emanating from Civil Service procedures. We urge the Department to focus recruitment efforts toward minority communities to achieve a more balanced racial and ethnic composition of staff.

The intent of Recommendation 7: The establishment of a Community Liaison and Public Information Officer (p. 155) is well taken. It is important that the Department have good communication with the community and that it take a proactive stand in disseminating information about YGC and the Juvenile Justice System. However, given spending limitations it appears that this position is not high priority. Its function ought to be served through identifying and designating one present staff position to be responsible for dissemination of information to the public and staff. If a new position is created it should



be well defined, and a job description emphasizing proactive information dissemination developed.

Further, we recommend that the Probation Department as a whole, from the Chief to counselors and probation officers, participate in increased community contact, in an effort to educate the public regarding the Juvenile Justice System.

The Commission strongly agrees with Recommendation 8: The establishment of an Ombudsman position under the aegis of the Juvenile Justice Commission. (p. 155) We propose creating the Office of Ombudsman responsible to the Juvenile Justice Commission. We feel creation of this office and function is extremely important in assisting the overall effort to improve services to youth and their families. [See Afterword, page 23]

## CONDITIONS OF CONFINEMENT

The Commission agrees that there is a need to improve the conditions of confinement for securely detained youth at YGC. We further agree that the medical, mental health, educational, counseling, recreation, assessment and classification services deserve particularly close attention and improvement.

Recommendation 1: Proposed co-educational activities wherever practical. (p. 158) We suggest that experimental efforts in this direction be initiated and that the establishment of a committee of professionals, including supervising probation officers, group counselors, health services and school staff be assembled to study the subject and bring forth a more specific recommendation.

The Commission agrees with Recommendation 2: that the Department should create a predictable full-day schedule of activities and should concentrate on assessment, education, recreation, group counseling and visitation to minimize the amount of time spent in the living unit. (p. 158) This recommendation should be implemented immediately.

The Commission endorses this recommendation. We commend the Probation Department for its initiative in this area and urge that the policy and procedures be finalized and implemented immediately. When the discipline and grievance system is finalized, the Juvenile Justice Commission would like to be thoroughly briefed on the nature of the procedures and how they will work.





Recommendation 4: the development of a plan and schedule for leisure activities (p. 158) is fully supported by the Commission, including all of its specific subsections.

The Commission agrees with Recommendation 5: Encouraging increased contact visitation available on a daily basis. (p. 160) Consistently, in public meetings the Commission was informed that visitation is an issue of critical importance to the community. We would like to see the visiting process made as convenient as possible for parents and families. The Commission believes this program may be appropriate for staffing by Mentors. The Commission recommends that a plan be developed to achieve this goal which includes the creating of visiting space outside of the living units. After the Commission is briefed, we recommend that the plan be implemented as soon as possible.

Recommendation 6: The Department should work with the San Francisco School District to improve the educational program at YGC. (p. 160)

Despite the difficult problems facing a school within a secure environment, the Commission believes that major improvements have been made under the leadership of the present principal. Still, we agree with the recommendation endorsing improvement in the educational program at YGC. The Commission supports all the sub-points enumerated in the Recommendation. We particularly emphasize the need to:

- 1) In the future, hire only teachers with a special education certificate and adequate assessment team personnel, and
- 2) Alter the administrative structure of YGC to end the "turf" wars between custody and program administrators and staff.

We believe it is necessary to develop policies and procedures that encourage coordination amongst the different departments. It is particularly important that coordination between custody and education programming be improved. The Commission believes that, in conflicts between custodial and educational demands, priority should be given to educational programming in most instances.

The Commission also agrees that the Learning Center should be separately housed and classrooms on the units should be closed.



Recommendation 7: The Probation Department should work with the San Francisco Department of Health to improve the current medical and mental health services for youths in residence at YGC. (p. 164)

Medical and mental health services should be improved as recommended. We agree fully with the first sentence in Recommendation 7, which states, "There needs to be strong statements from the Chief Probation Officer and the Director of Juvenile Hall that vetoing of medical and mental health recommendations must cease immediately." The other suggestions for improvements in the medical and mental health system should also be implemented as soon as possible.

The Commission agrees with all of the sub-points in this recommendation with the following exceptions:

The Commission believes that the subject of the sub-acute psychiatric unit needs further study before any action on implementing or discarding it is taken.

The Commission does not support any reduction in professional mental health staff. The YGC needs all the professional staff it has at the present time and, quite possibly, more.

The Commission would like to emphasize its support for the sub-recommendation on page 165, "all (therapeutically oriented) groups at YGC be co-facilitated by a member of the forensic staff and a detention counselor."

The Commission supports Recommendation 8: To develop and implement an effective behavior management program for youth in residence at YGC. (p. 169) The specific structure of the system is better left to professionals in the field. We suggest a team of probation, health services, school staff and group counselors be convened to determine the best behavior management system and to assist in its implementation.

We strongly support the goals for an effective behavior management system set forth in the report. (p. 169)

The Commission agrees with Recommendation 9: The Establishment of an effective security classification system within YGC based on comprehensive intake assessment. (p. 170)



## CONTRACTING FOR DIRECT SERVICES

Recommendation 1: The Department should enter into an independent contract agreement with a private agency to identify, procure, train, develop, monitor, reimburse and evaluate a variety of direct services. (p. 171)

Recommendation 2: A new staff position to procure, negotiate, monitor, and evaluate the independent service contract. (p. 172)

The Commission strongly believes that the responsibility to seek out, utilize and evaluate services for youth who come into contact with the Juvenile Justice System is the proper function of the Probation Department and should not be delegated away from Department and Court supervision and control. It is the Probation Department's responsibility to contract with, monitor and evaluate the community agencies in San Francisco which can provide the services needed by youth.

The Commission urges use of the quality youth services available in this City to the widest extent possible. The Commission, however, is not in favor of entering into a contractual agreement with a private community agency to serve as an umbrella through which to provide diversion, detention and treatment services, as proposed in the Report. It is the Commission's belief that though the delivery of services to youth is best done by community agencies, the Probation department itself, not another community agency, should be responsible for maintaining good working relationships with the system; that is, identifying the services needed and the providers capable of delivering the services, maintaining good working relationships with the network of community providers, monitoring contracts, reimbursing services and evaluating the effectiveness of services.

The Commission agrees that diversion, detention and treatment services need improvement. Whatever steps the Probation Department must take to improve its own services and the services of community providers should be planned and implemented immediately. Means of evaluating the effectiveness of the service, and whether articulated goals and objectives are actually being performed, should be built into each probation and provider service.

We feel that in order to properly perform this job within the Probation Department, a new administrative position should be created for the director of service programs. We are not attempting to designate a title but shall refer to



the new position title as "director" for ease of communication in this report. The search for the director should be widely advertised and a candidate selected who is well qualified, who has broad experience in and access to the community, who is knowledgeable about the available community services, who is well accepted and respected in the community and who, because of his or her credentials, will be well accepted and respected by the staff.

We feel it is very important that:

- 1) The director's job must be a full time job and should not include other duties or responsibilities.
- 2) The director should be given a senior management position, i.e., the person should be given "cabinet" status equal to the Directors of Juvenile Hall, Log Cabin Ranch, Probation Services and Administrative Services.
- 3) The director should have sufficient staff allocated to allow the duties to be properly performed.

These three items are critically important as a demonstration to the staff and the community that the Presiding Judge and the Chief Probation Officer fully support and promote the concept of utilization of quality community services as a necessary component of services provided to San Francisco youth.

However, the function of linking youth to community services and insuring that those services are of high quality should remain within the Probation Department. The Commission believes that more community involvement is an essential component for improving services for youth. To this end, it is recommended that community representatives be brought into the process of identifying needs of youth and identifying and evaluating appropriate services providers. This community based approach of service evaluation was pioneered by the Department of Youth Services in Massachusetts. Community involvement in the identification, development and evaluation of quality community agencies providing youth services should be developed because the community has considerable information and knowledge to offer on the subject and the input will be helpful to the Department.





Recommendation 3: An Advisory Council to guide and advise the Department and the independent service contractor. (p. 172)

While we do not agree with the recommendation for an independent service contractor (see Recommendations 1 and 2 above)), we do believe that an Advisory "Committee" would be an important asset to the director of community services. The Report suggests an Advisory "Council" consisting of representatives from the Departments of Social Service and Health, the School District, the Police Department, citizen advocates, elected and appointed officials, community and neighborhood leaders, young people familiar with the area of juvenile justice and delinquency prevention and youth service programs operating in the neighborhoods. We are concerned that there are a number of tasks which need to be addressed immediately and believe that such a large and unwieldy group would not be able to perform those tasks.

We favor a much smaller advisory Committee, one which meets frequently while the need exists, one which is appointed immediately for reasons that we shall articulate and one which does not include anyone connected with a service program which hopes to become a service provider to the Department, i.e., does not include anyone with a potential conflict of interest.

We recommend that a small working Advisory Committee and not a Council be formed. The make-up of the Committee should be decided by a triumvirate of the Presiding Judge, the Chief Probation Officer and the Chairperson of the Juvenile Justice Commission. The Committee should include members of the Commission and members of the community at large. We strongly urge that the Chairperson of the Advisory Committee be a member of the Juvenile Justice Commission because we are members of and representatives at large of the community. Further, we have the responsibility and the statutory authority to take an active role in meeting these exciting new challenges that are facing our service providers to the youth.

The Advisory Committee should be appointed immediately and begin meeting on a weekly basis. The duties would include working closely with and advising the Chief Probation Officer on the following items and others that will develop as planning evolves:

- 1) Advise those persons drafting the job announcement and job description for the director of community services.



- 2) Perform the paper pre-screening of candidates according to previously agreed criteria.
- 3) Participate in the interviewing process and recommend 3-5 finalists for the director position.
- 4) Advise the new director in the development of a plan to involve members of the community in a meaningful manner in the service of our youth.
- 5) Advise the new director in the development of a plan to catalog, evaluate and utilize existing community service agencies.

Recommendation 4: The use of Mentors to assist Probation Officers to supervise clients (p. 173) is an approach the Department should pursue. It is very important that the Mentors be well qualified people of sound moral and ethical background and well trained to execute the responsibilities of mentoring.

Also, it is important that the function of Mentors and their exact responsibilities be very clearly defined. It is presently not clear as to whether the Mentors will provide only guidance and light supervision or hard line tracking and custodial level supervision. We believe the guidance level supervision is appropriate for Mentors, not custodial tracking. The concept and its implementation needs to be well thought out and planned, as well as closely monitored and reviewed for effectiveness.

Recommendation 4 - continued: Outreach and Tracking slots to be provided by private vendors to be used as initial placements for supervising juveniles after release from a residential program and diversion. Low caseload high supervision contact would be provided by college graduates or ex-offender caseworkers. (p.174)

The Commission agrees with this recommendation. We agree with the principle of providing more supervision of youth in the community during initial placement and subsequent to release from residential programs. However, we believe that the concept is not sufficiently clear to be implemented as it is stated, and needs further clarification and clear definition before it is instituted. In particular, the report does not make clear whether these college students and ex-offenders are the Mentors suggested above, and whether it is a paid or a volunteer position.



Recommendation 4 - continued: Alternative Dispute Resolution for youths arrested and referred, but whose instant offense and offense history do not require the more formal machinery of the legal process. (p. 175)

The Commission supports the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution for cases that do not require the more formal machinery of the legal process. We caution, however, using even this process for cases that would otherwise be entirely diverted from the system.

Recommendation 4 - continued: Community Programming. Non-residential full day programming including educational, vocational and recreational services for court committed youth. This is specifically focused on youth who have a satisfactory living arrangement but who are not motivated to participate in traditional education/vocational training activities. (p. 175)

We strongly support this recommendation.

Recommendation 4 - continued: Group and Foster Homes and Therapeutic Communities should be developed for use by the Department. (p. 178)

The Commission continues to strongly urge the widest possible use of group and foster homes and therapeutic communities as an alternative to secure detention. Wider use of and better quality Group and foster homes has been a primary concern of the Juvenile Justice Commission for many years. We believe the main obstacle is the rate structure at the state level. It is very important that the Probation Department and the Superior Court work closely with the Mayor's Office and the Department of Social Services to address this problem. Advocacy at the state level for greater economic incentives to private providers to establish and maintain group and foster homes is needed.

#### INTAKE DECISION MAKING AND DIVERSION

The Commission agrees that intake decision making needs to be improved and that increasing the number of youth diverted from the court system to effective community-based resources is highly desirable and urgently needed. We believe that health services should be an integrated part of the entire decision making and service process, from the Youth Guidance Center to the community level.

Recommendation 1: The Probation Department should establish Youth Service Centers (YSC) in the Mission and



emphasized at public hearings that there is serious need for bilingual and bicultural and racially and ethnically balanced staff.

Because the YSC is such a promising idea, the Commission recommends that one YSC be established as a pilot project, to allow for the care in planning that we feel will be required. One such center can be initiated, monitored and evaluated, in order to create a smooth running operation before broad commitments are made. As for the location of such centers, the Commission is inclined to support the establishment of the first center, or pilot project, in the Outer Mission/Hunters Point/Bayview neighborhoods, based on statistics relating to the number of youth contacts with the system; we would favor the second such center in the Western-Addition/Haight-Ashbury neighborhood, to serve the central and northwestern part of the City.

We also have considered the need for immediate improvement in the diversion process, and recommend the prompt development by the Probation Department of plans to divert youth accused of minor violations to existing community services. This would not only avoid delays in implementing the overall goal of diverting appropriate youth from YGC, but would be a logical precursor to the establishment of a YSC.

The Commission offers the following direction in regards to the establishment of Youth Service Centers:

Intake services should be improved wherever the services are located: YGC, Probation Intake or the new centers;

The pilot project Center should provide a small number of beds and a close analysis of their usefulness should be made during the project period. The beds should only be used for "cooling down" or emergency purposes which we anticipate would be required if a 24-hour intake Center is established and should not be considered detention beds. The Centers should be unlocked with adequate staff supervision.

Planning for the pilot YSC should begin immediately.

A timetable for program development and evaluation should be thoroughly worked out during the planning phase.





A high quality evaluation component must be included in project planning.

Ongoing adjustments in the program should be made as evaluation data comes in, so that the program is "de-bugged" before it is expanded.

Recommendation 2: The Department should develop the capability to provide some level of risk and needs assessment and plan for all youths referred to YGC or a YSC. (p. 185)

The Commission agrees with Recommendation 2, that the Probation Department provide preliminary risk and need assessment as well as action planning for all youth referred to its intake centers, including its present intake program at YGC. It also agrees that if the Mentor system is well-conceived and executed, its involvement at the earliest possible point is desirable.

Recommendation 3: The Department should establish a pick-up order registry to log every pick-up order issued and assign a Mentor to follow up every order. (p. 186)

If the recommendation is proposing an improved methodology for insuring that youths appear for intake, probation appearances and court dates in the least restrictive and most effective manner, the Commission is in full agreement. However, the Commission believes this recommendation to be too vague and in need of further clarification.

#### DETENTION DECISION MAKING AND SUPERVISION

The Commission agrees with the general intent of the Recommendation in this section. There is an urgent need to improve the Police Department's and Probation Department's arrest and detention decision making processes to reduce the number of youth detained pending court appearance. We believe that health services should be an integrated part of the decision making process.

Recommendation 1: The Department should promulgate guidelines for detention decision-making and establish a validation process for periodic review. (p. 186)

The Commission strongly agrees that validated objective guidelines for detention decision making should be employed. We further agree that the instrument used for decision making should "embody the spirit of nationally recognized standards which provide guidance for the use of



Recommendation 3: The Department should develop nonsecure residential beds to be provided on an emergency foster care and group shelter basis. (p. 189)

We strongly support increasing the number of nonsecure residential beds in both the foster care and group shelter settings. However, the actual number of beds proposed for both recommendations 2 and 3 are not supported by data presented in the Report. We, therefore, cannot comment on the appropriateness of the number of slots and beds recommended.

Recommendation 4: Discontinue the use of West Portal Receiving Center and provide nonsecure residential programs for status offenders. (p.189)

The Commission feels that substantial improvements in the program at the West Portal Receiving Center are critically important and should be implemented immediately. The Commission believes that moving the facility off the site of the YGC would be an improvement. However, the Report presents insufficient information to conclude that the West Portal Center should be closed.

The Commission's greatest concern is that the services provided to status offenders be significantly improved quickly and that they include more therapeutic and rehabilitative services.

#### **CORRECTIONAL DECISION MAKING AND SUPERVISION**

Recommendation 1: The Department should establish a committee to implement a classification and case management system. The system should provide a thorough assessment process that documents a youth's criminal history, current needs and potential risk to the community integral to a system that provides a wide range of service programs from secure institutional to minimum community based custody. (p. 190)

Recommendation 2: The Department should give serious consideration to adopting the principles of the OJJDP Community Reintegration Model approach to serious and violent offenders for selected youths currently committed to YGC and the Log Cabin Ranch. (p. 192)

Recommendation 3: The Department should close down the B-1 program as other correctional program approaches are established. (p.193)



The Commission strongly supports all three Recommendations and sub-recommendations found in this section and believe their implementation will improve correctional decision making. "There is a need to reconceptualize and upgrade the dispositional decision making process and implement a comprehensive correctional classification and case management system." (p.189) In our view, this process should begin immediately.

## RESEARCH AND THE INFORMATION SYSTEM

Recommendation 1: The Department should establish a committee to review the current information system and recommend a reorganization which will support the needs of the administrative, line and contracted staff. (p. 194)

Recommendation 2: Over the long term, the Departmental information system should develop into one capable of system-wide evaluation. (p. 195)

Recommendation 3: The Department should provide an additional full-time professional position to staff the committee and provide operational continuity once the committee produces a plan. (p. 195)

The Commission endorses recommendations 1 and 2 regarding the Probation Department's research and the information system. It is very important that the goals of the information system be firmly established before modifications are made, so that the information gained is as useful as possible.

It is our belief that the primary goal of the research and information system is to assist in insuring that the Probation Department is doing the best job it can in providing high quality services to youth.

The system should be focused to support this goal. Large amounts of useless information producing a "paralysis of analysis" should certainly be avoided. Focused indicators of success and the ability to summarize varied information into understandable categories are important qualities for the research and information system.

Regarding recommendation 3, the Commission looks to the advice and recommendation of the Chief Probation Officer as to the need for adding a full time position in this role.



We strongly support developing a research and information system that will allow good quality evaluation--one sophisticated enough to determine the specific impact of programs and activities as well as their success.

#### AFTERWORD

The Juvenile Justice Commission is legally constituted to inquire into the administration of the juvenile court law in the county or region in which the Commission serves. By law, the Commission has access to all publicly administered institutions authorized, or whose use is authorized, by the juvenile court law and is mandated to inspect such institutions. The Commission also may recommend to any person charged with the administration of the provisions of juvenile court law such changes as it has concluded, after investigation, will be beneficial (Welfare and Institutions Code, Sections 225, 229 and 230).

The Juvenile Justice Commission is in a unique position, particularly in light of the Jefferson Report and our recommendations, to assume a central role which will permit and encourage wider community participation. We are constituted as an advisory body to the judge of the juvenile court. Since we represent the community at large, we can readily extend our already existing organization to representatives of the community. This could be done in a variety of ways, perhaps through a committee system which works directly with the Commission.

We enthusiastically accept what we consider to be greater responsibility to participate in the planning and implementation of a "New Agenda". In so doing, the Commission will be exploring means by which we may better do our job. The Commission is in need of an Executive





Director and support staff, without which we cannot adequately carry out what we consider the imperatives of real change in the system. We intend to be in the forefront of change which the Jefferson Report and the public reaction to it will undoubtedly generate. We join with the community in our view that the cause of youth in San Francisco merits the best effort that we can give.

Respectfully submitted,

THE JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMISSION of the  
CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

ADAM A. BANKS  
JEWEL KOLLING BASSE  
DANIEL P. BINET  
STEVE COHN  
SYLVIA B. COURTNEY  
JEANETTE DUNCKEL  
FRANK KELLEHER

JOYCE B. LADAR  
BEATRICE CHALLISS LAWS  
MICHAEL MAROVICH  
MICHAEL A. ROY, M.D.  
RAYMOND SHONHOLTZ  
YORI WADA  
MAGDALYNNE GATES WINSTON

DATE: January 7, 1988

BY: /s/  
FRANK KELLEHER, CHAIR





